



At State (left photo)

The Norton Yellow's Kaitlyn Campbell takes a break on the firing line after shooting an outstanding 98 from the prone position in the State BB Gun Championships on Saturday in Alma. Kaitlyn was the top aggregate marksman in the competition.

- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

(right photo)

Kaitlyn Campbell of the Norton Yellow Team squeezed off another bull's eye as head coach Cameron Archer observed during the State BB Gun Championships on Saturday in Alma. Kaitlyn was the champion shooter, not only from this standing position where she shot a 94, but in aggregate marksmanship.

- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd



Norton County BB Gun Team takes fourth

By DICK BOYD

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The Norton County Rotary BB Gun team placed fourth in the 44th annual State BB Gun Championships in Alma on Saturday, despite outshooting the third place team. Norton's five member Yellow Team had the third best shooting score with a 1767 but was sixth best in the written test of gun safety knowledge with a 428 which dropped them out of the top three overall.

The written test was taken first thing in the morning and prior to any of the four shooting positions but scores were not announced until after the shooting scores were posted.

The young Blue Jay marksmen got off to a slow start in the prone position, ending in sixth place, three points out of a tie for fourth. Firing from the standing position, the toughest of the four, the Norton shooters demonstrated that they were among the best shooters in the state as they recorded the top score and moved up into second place, just 11 points out of first behind eventual champion Pottawatomie/Riley County 4-H Purple.

Next came the sitting position and Norton placed fourth to drop into third place behind Pottawatomie/Riley County 4-H and Wyandotte County Gold, who won the sitting competition and eventually finished in second place overall.

In the kneeling position, the fourth and final and considered to be the second hardest position, Norton finished fourth but still had the third best aggregate score. The Flint Hills Junior Shooters No.1 from Alma had the highest score on the test so moved ahead of Norton in the final standings.

Pottawatomie/Riley County 4-H Purple won the championship with a shooting score of 1805, written test score of 456 and total score of 2261. In second place was Wyandotte County Gold with a shooting score of 1800, test of 432 and total of 2232.

Flint Hills Junior Shooters No.1 placed third with a 1743 shooting, 466 test and total of 2209.

Norton finished fourth with a 1767 shooting, 24 more points than Flint Hills, a test score of 428, 38 points behind Flint Hills, and a total of 2195, just 14 points out of third.

Derby VFW placed fifth with a shooting score of 1719, test score of 424 and total of 2143.

The Norton Blue Team finished in sixth place with a 1687 shooting, test of 404 and 2091 total.

They were followed by Bull Masters No.1, 1680 shooting, 392 test, 2072 total; Flint Hills Junior Shooters No.2 of Alma, 1625 shooting, 440 test, 2065 total; Pottawatomie/Riley County 4-H Silver, 1626 shooting, 396 test, 2022 total; Flint Hills Junior Shooters No.3 of Alma, 1489 shooting, 434 test, 1923 total; Bull Masters No.2, 1525 shooting, 376 test, 1901 total; Norton Red Team, 1409 shooting, 368 test, 1777 total.

The top three teams from the shoot qualified for competition in the Daisy/Jaycees International BB Gun Championships which will be held again this year in Bowling Green, Ky. on July 3-5.

Norton's fourth place finish does not qualify them to continue on; however, the Norton County shooters have already qualified for the State 4-H Shoot in Alma on April 18 by winning the championship of the Kansas Regional 4-H Shooting Sports Match on February 28 in Oakley.

The top three shooting teams from the State 4-H Shoot will also qualify for international competition so the young Blue Jays still have a chance to go to Bowling Green to compete this year if they shoot well on April 18. Incidentally, there is no written test in the State 4-H Shoot. Had this been the case on Saturday, Norton obviously would have qualified for the international with the third best shooting score.

BB gun shooting consists of very precise, accurate marksmanship. Shooters fire their BB gun from a distance of 16-feet-4.75 inches and the center of the target is the same size as a BB. A perfect shot comes when the BB hits exactly on the center of the target. A bull's eye can be a few millimeters off center but not much.

Shooters are 8 to 14 years of age.

TEAM MEMBERS

Members of this year's Norton Yellow Team and their ages were: Kaitlyn Campbell, 14; David Smith, 13; Gabriel Bird, 13; Dalton Vanover, 11; James Berry, 10. Alternates were Lane Archer, 14; Erin Archer, 12.

Cameron Archer returned as the head coach and the Yellow Team coach.

Shooting for the Blue Team were: Zachary Bird, 13; Cameron Heikes, 11; Micheala Sorenson,

10; Jena Risewick, 10; Trenton Sprague, 10.

Blue Team coaches were Mike Campbell and Cole Archer.

Members of the Red Team were: Lizzie Smith, 11; Evan Chambers, 10; Weston Harting, 9; Dylan Goss, 8; Brayden Smith, 8.

Coaches of the Red Team were: Doug Smith and Ted Hull.

INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

In addition to all members of the top three teams each receiving a medal, the top three individuals in each shooting position as well as the top three aggregate shooters also received medals.

Three Norton marksmen received individual medals for their accuracy in firing a BB gun.

Kaitlyn Campbell of the Norton Yellow Team was the top aggregate marksman out of all the shooters. She recorded a 98 in prone, 94 in standing, 93 in sitting and 90 in kneeling for a shooting total of 375 x 400. Her standing score was tops and her prone score was second highest, earning her three medals. She tied for third in sitting but placed fourth based on bull's eyes.

The Norton Yellow's James Berry won a medal for his second high score of 93 in standing. He was also fifth high in prone with a 96. James was also fourth high aggregate shooter with a 96 in prone, 93 in standing, 88 in sitting, 90 in kneeling for a 367.

Lane Archer, alternate on the Norton Yellow Team, was high aggregate shooter among alternates. He shot a 97 prone, 89 standing, 96 sitting, 97 kneeling for a total of 379 x 400. He was the top shooter in prone, sitting and kneeling and fourth high in standing.

Gabriel Bird of the Norton Yellow Team tied for fourth in standing with an 88. David Smith of the Norton Yellow Team and Zachary Bird of the Norton Blue Team tied for third in sitting with 93s.

INDIVIDUAL SCORES

Scores of the Yellow Team shooters were: Kaitlyn Campbell, 98 prone, 94 standing, 93 sitting, 90 kneeling, 375 total shooting, 90 test, 465 total score; James Berry, 96 prone, 93 standing, 88 sitting, 90 kneeling, 367 total shooting, 80 test, 447 total score; Gabriel Bird, 93 prone, 88 standing, 86 sitting, 88 kneeling, 355 total shooting, 82 test, 437 total score; David Smith, 87 prone, 82 standing, 93 sitting, 89 kneeling, 351 total shooting, 88 test, 439 total score; Dalton Vanover, 75 prone, 76 standing, 88 sitting, 80 kneeling, 319 total

shooting, 88 test, 407 total score.

Scores of Yellow Team alternates were: Lane Archer, 97 prone, 89 standing, 96 sitting, 97 kneeling, 379 total shooting, 90 test, 469 total score; Erin Archer, 96 prone, 88 standing, 89 sitting, 83 kneeling, 356 total shooting, 88 test, 444 total score.

Blue Team shooters' scores were: Trenton Sprague, 84 prone, 84 standing, 88 sitting, 90 kneeling, 346 total shooting, 78 test, 424 total score; Jena Risewick, 90 prone, 83 standing, 90 sitting, 81 kneeling, 344 total shooting, 84 test, 428 total score; Zachary Bird, 88 prone, 69 standing, 93 sitting, 84 kneeling, 334 total shooting, 76 test, 410 total score; Cameron Heikes, 79 prone, 81 standing, 91 sitting, 81 kneeling, 332 total shooting, 76 test, 408 total score; Micheala Sorenson, 92 prone, 80 standing, 81 sitting, 78 kneeling, 331 total shooting, 90 test, 421 total score.

Norton Red Team scores were: Brayden Smith, 88 prone, 59 standing, 84 sitting, 81 kneeling, 312 total shooting, 74 test, 386 total score; Evan Chambers, 76 prone, 60 standing, 83 sitting, 77 kneeling, 296 total shooting, 80 test, 376 total score; Weston Harting, 81 prone, 65 standing, 80 sitting, 61 kneeling, 287 total shooting, 68 test, 355 total score; Lizzie Smith, 71 prone, 64 standing, 73 sitting, 77 kneeling, 285 total shooting, 68 test, 353 total score; Dylan Goss, 64 prone, 54 standing, 56 sitting, 55 kneeling, 229 total shooting, 78 test, 307 total score.

LOTS OF SUPPORT

Coach Archer said he really appreciated the exceptionally large crowd of fans who traveled to Alma to support the young Norton marksmen. He thanked the assistant coaches and other volunteers.

Assisting classroom instructor Sara Campbell was mother and former shooter Keri Vanover, who graded targets.

"I hoped coming into the shoot that we would at least place third and we came very close, shooting third best," said Norton head coach Cameron Archer.

"We were shooting at least 15 points better coming into the shoot but just didn't quite reach that. We should have a good chance to place high enough in the State 4-H Shoot to qualify for the international championships.

"I'm proud of our youngsters no matter the outcome. They did their very best."

Coach Archer thanked the parents who encourage their children to do their best and practice regularly. He also thanked the parents who graded targets on Saturday and help out during Monday night practices throughout the year.

Norton's preparation for the

state shoot began in October when the shooters entered the gun safety program, sponsored by Daisy and the National Rifle Association. After passing the course, they began practicing marksmanship in each of the four positions and studying for the written test of gun safety knowledge. Practices are held every Monday evening and shooters are encouraged to also practice at home.

Coach Archer thanked the Rotary Club for sponsoring the program and Alberta Slaby for giving the team a place to practice. He also thanked the Norton Telegram for continued news coverage and the entire community for always supporting in any way possible.

Shoot officials included James Eberwein, match director and Paul Seematter, range officer.

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